ANG Bayan
Pahayagan ng Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas
Pinapatnubayan ng Marxismo-Leninismo-Maoismo

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Editorial

Thwart U.S. aggression

Threat of U.S. military aggression, sign of ruling system's further decay

Along with the US' incitement of a war of aggression against Iraq, the US and its puppet Macapagal-Arroyo regime have incessantly been maneuvering and scheming to further intensify US military intervention against the revolutionary movement in the Philippines.

In the face of this, the revolutionary forces and the people have stepped up their opposition and resistance alongside the growing opposition of the Filipino people and the world's peoples to US plans to attack Iraq.

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From the Central Committee

AB, twice monthly

Starting this March, the Central Committee will be publishing Ang Bayan (AB) twice monthly.

This decision is based on a recognition of the important role AB plays as a regular political mass newspaper and the main medium for Party propaganda.

In this regard, we draw inspiration from the memory of Comrade Antonio Zumel, communist journalist and former AB editor-in-chief.

For the past several years, the Party has been using AB to sharply expose and resist the successive antipeople and pro-imperialist puppet regimes and the entire crisis-ridden semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system. AB has thus become an instrument to clarify our tasks in strengthening the Party and the revolutionary movement and advancing the mass movement, united front and armed struggle.

There is utmost need for AB's frequent and timely issuance so that the Party could promptly clarify its analyses, stand, policies and calls in the face of extremely volatile national and international issues and the revolutionary movement's accelerated pace.

AB likewise plays a very important role in promptly and continuously clarifying the principles and stand of the Party

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Due to widespread resistance, the thoroughly shamefaced Malacañang-US tandem has been forced to withdraw its initial plan to allow American troops into Sulu in February under the pretext of Balikatan 03-1 and fighting the Abu Sayyaf.

Given this situation, the US State Department and Malacañang have come up with a scheme to drown out the cries of opposition to the all-our terrorist war and the deployment of American troops. It was Gen. Angelo Reyes and US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld who decided on this plan.

To make it appear that it was necessary to intensify the war and seek "America's assistance," the AFP is currently sowing a terror campaign simultaneous with a political campaign to show the need for America's help.

The scheme includes the bombing at the Davao International Airport on March 4 that killed more than 20 innocent civilians and wounded more than a hundred others. Right after the incident, the AFP was quick to blame the MILF and NPA. The US was also quick to offer "assistance," to which a chorus of politicians and the AFP responded with appeals to allow the entry of American troops.

The Macapagal-Arroyo regime and its US imperialist master have long been itching to have US forces train their guns directly at the revolutionary movement. It was Macapagal-Arroyo herself who first asserted that Balikatan 03-1 be launched in Southern Tagalog, where the revolutionary movement has scored significant victories. The announcement of plans to hold Balikatan 03-1 in Mindoro Occidental may be considered an act of provocation by foreign troops against the revolutionary movement.

At present, there are at least 1,300 American interventionist troops in various parts of the Philippines ostensibly for training exercises. But their long-term goal is to prepare for direct deployment in the counterguerrilla war against the NPA and MILF.

One of the possible plans being hatched by the US and its puppet regime is launching massive military aggression a la Vietnam. As the revolutionary movement continues to expand and gain strength, the reactionary regime scrambles to intensify war. It is desperate for US military assistance and the US military's direct participation.

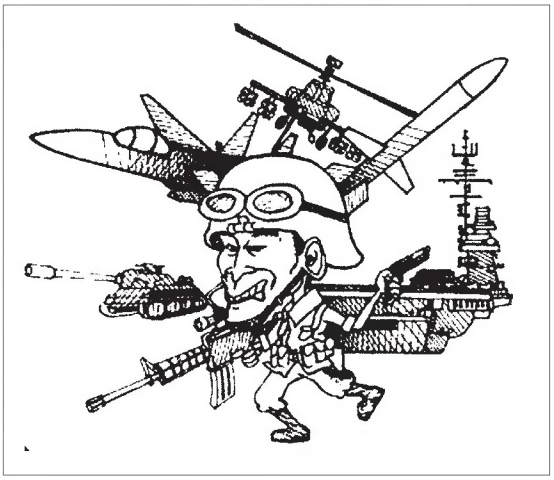
The Bush-Arroyo cabal is extremely hard put how to railroad its plans to intensify US military intervention in the face of growing and expanding opposition.

Its initial plans of deploying American troops for combat in Sulu were strongly assailed by various sectors, senators and congressmen. It has been declared "the vilest form of treachery" committed by the Macapagal-Arroyo regime. No satisfactory or legal basis could be given for the deployment of American troops for combat, even under the pretext of the war against the Abu Sayyaf.

The people of Sulu have likewise assailed the plan. It has rekindled memories of the brutal carnage experienced by the people on the island at the hands of American occupation troops in 1901 and raised their consciousness anew against foreign occupation.

The people and the revolutionary movement stand ready to resist measures leading to direct US armed aggression in the Philippines. The people and the revolutionary movement will not be cowed by threats from a rotting regime and an imperialist mired in crisis. In various parts of Mindanao, the Moro people likewise stand ready to wage resistance. American troops who intervene in Sulu, they say, will be made to pay for their blood debts.

More than ever, the revolutionary movement is rapidly advancing and gaining strength. To thwart the US-Macapagal-Arroyo regime's evil scheme, it stands ready to engage in all arenas of struggle: armed and unarmed, legal and illegal, open and underground, in the countryside and cities, within and outside the country.



Worsening military intervention and the growing danger of direct US military aggression are signals of a further major deterioration in the rotten semicolonial and semifeudal system.

The people and the revolutionary movement will resist every scheme by the US-Macapagal-Arroyo regime to implement and expand US military intervention. In the event of military aggression, all stops will be pulled to resist it until the attacking American troops are driven out. **AB**

GRP discards peace talks

The puppet Macapagal-Arroyo regime has had greater gall to implement pro-imperialist and militarist measures in the face of intensifying US military intervention. Among the "casualties" of such brazenness are the peace talks with both the NDFP and MILF.

In the case of the NDFP, the reactionary government categorized the CPP, NPA and Comrade Jose Ma. Sison as "terrorists," in violation of the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees, the accord that ensures the security of persons involved in the talks. At the same time, the government campaigned before the US and European governments to include Comrade Sison as well as the CPP and NPA on their lists of "foreign terrorist organizations." The objective was to push the revolutionary forces into signing a "final peace agreement" that called for nothing less than the surrender of arms and the capitulation of the entire revolutionary movement.

It was Malacañang's refusal to withdraw its terrorist categorization of the revolutionary movement and its continued insistence on surrender instead of resolving on the negotiating table the roots of the Philippine civil war that obstructed the peace talks. Malacañang declared the peace talks' indefinite suspension as a step towards eventually discarding them altogether.

The regime made practically the same maneuvers to discard the ceasefire agreement and peace talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. From February 11, intense military operations pummelled the Liguasan Marsh in North Cotabato and Maguindanao, in violation of the existing ceasefire agreement between the GRP and MILF.

The AFP launched the operations to force the MILF to accept provisions of an agreement prepared by the regime along the framework of the MILF's surrender. As with the NDFP, the GRP issued an ultimatum to the MILF: should the latter not accede to the proposed framework for the talks, the MILF will be considered "terrorist" and attacks against it will be intensified. In the face of such a serious insult to, and repudiation of, the ceasefire agreement, the MILF declared that the peace talks have ended and that it was time to launch a guerrilla counter-offensive against the AFP. **AB**

MILF launches guerrilla war against AFP

"We have been pushed to the wall... thus, all those with weapons must fight to the death." This was the gist of a 30-minute call to the Moro people on February 24 by Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) chair Hashim Salamat. In his statement read over the radio, Salamat said with emotion that only in this manner could the Moro people attain the freedom they desired.

Salamat's message was in response to relentless and renewed AFP attacks on MILF camps that began as early as December 2002 and were stepped up on February 15 when Macapagal-Arroyo ordered the MILF's annihilation. Macapagal-Arroyo's officials gave the distorted rationalization that the MILF had violated the ceasefire and that it should be declared "terrorist."

Since February 8, more than 120,000 people from Maguindanao and North Cotabato have been forced to evacuate due to the AFP's bombings and operations.

The AFP operations have prompted Salamat to declare that the ceasefire and peace talks were no longer in force.

In self-defense, MILF fighters started launching a series of guerrilla counter-attacks a day after the AFP occupied the "Buliok Complex" encompassing North Cotabato and Maguindanao. Ten elements of the Philippine Marines were killed in an ambush along the Narciso Ramos Highway in Parang, Maguindanao and a tank was destroyed in Balabagan, Sultan Kudarat on February 16.

On February 18, up to 16 elements of the 26th IB, 64th IB and paramilitary forces were killed and 15 wounded in an ambush on a military vehicle and in raids launched in Matanog, Shariff Aguak and Datu Piang in Maguindanao and in Kauswagan, Lanao del Sur. Meantime, the 57th IB detachment in Barangay Bitu, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao was harassed on February 22. On February 24, six soldiers were killed in an ambush in Buldon, South Cotabato, as well as two CAFGU elements in Sirawai, South Cotabato.

Five soldiers were killed when the MILF raided the 33rd IB detachment in Barangay Timbabawan, Tungawan, Zamboanga Sibuguey on February 25. Three elements of the 7th IB were likewise killed in Barangay Lagandang, Isulan, Sultan Kudarat in an ambush on February 28. **AB**

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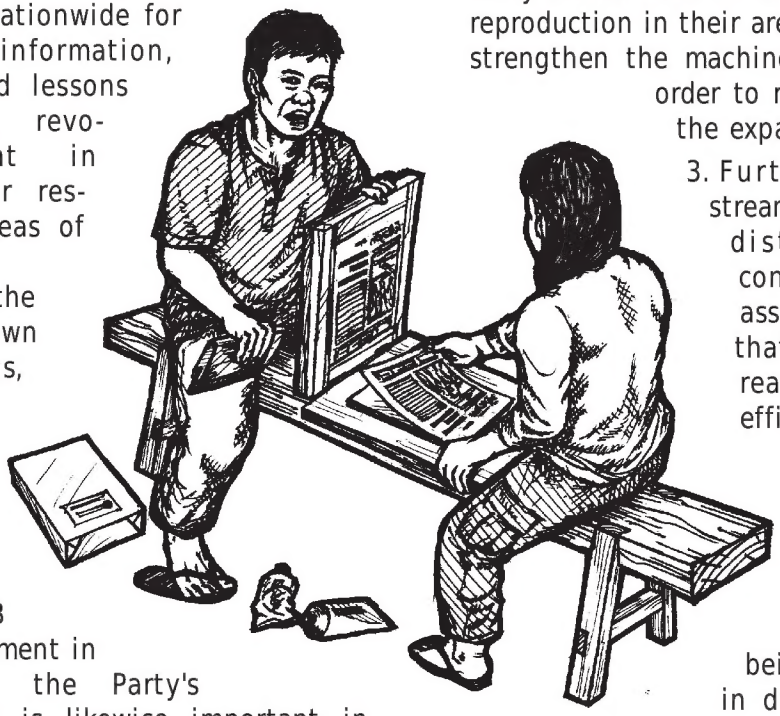
and the revolutionary movement on timely issues before Party members, the revolutionary forces and the people, for the purpose of effectively advancing revolutionary work in various arenas and of various scope, especially in the face of relentless onslaughts by US imperialism and local reactionaries.

It must also serve as a quick medium for Party organizations and members and the revolutionary forces nationwide for exchanging news, information, calls, experiences and lessons in advancing the revolutionary movement in general and in their respective fields and areas of responsibility.



The Party, from the Central Committee down to the basic units, continually and thoroughly resolves a number of questions regarding AB's issuance. These efforts at all levels mirror how much we value AB as an important instrument in continuously honing the Party's political keenness. It is likewise important in forging the entire Party's ideological, political and organizational unity and its leadership over the revolutionary forces and the people in advancing revolutionary struggle.

We must decisively address and continue to resolve the following questions that are attendant to coming out with AB more frequently as well as tasks related to this endeavor:

1. Further streamlining, expediting and expanding the system of direct and indirect reporting or correspondence to enable AB to promptly publish articles on the situation, issues and advance of the revolutionary movement in all areas of work nationwide. We take efforts to enable AB to respond to the most recent events and issues so it could assist in guiding us in our current tactics and practice. Correspondents for various areas of work must be identified, including chief correspondents from leading organs. They are responsible for ensuring that news and information from their areas of responsibility that must reach the AB editorial staff immediately are promptly and efficiently sent.

2. Further expanding AB's circulation to ensure copies not only for each Party member but also for fighters of the people's army, leaders and activists of revolutionary mass organizations. It is the obligation of leading Party committees to organize the newspaper's reproduction in their areas of responsibility and strengthen the machinery for this purpose in order to respond to the needs of the expanding mass base.

3. Further expediting and streamlining the system of distribution. We must conduct careful studies and assess ways of ensuring that copies of AB reach its readers immediately and efficiently. All the effort and expenses that have been put into developing the newspaper's various aspects will come to nothing if AB ends up being piled in storage or in drophouses for weeks or even months. We must persist in eliminating obstacles and solving problems in the distribution system and continuously develop the system of mobilizing and coordinating the various sections of the movement for this purpose. Improvements in this area will be of benefit not only to propaganda work but to other areas of work and arenas of struggle as well.

4. Further achieving basic unity on rules in translating the issue into its various editions. It is important to further invigorate exchanges and cooperation regarding AB's translated editions to ensure the continued development of our translation work.

In this regard, we would like to stress that AB is a widespread collective endeavor by the Party and the revolutionary mass movement— from sending reports, correspondence and articles to publishing, reproducing, distributing and using it for propaganda and education work among the revolutionary forces and the people. AB

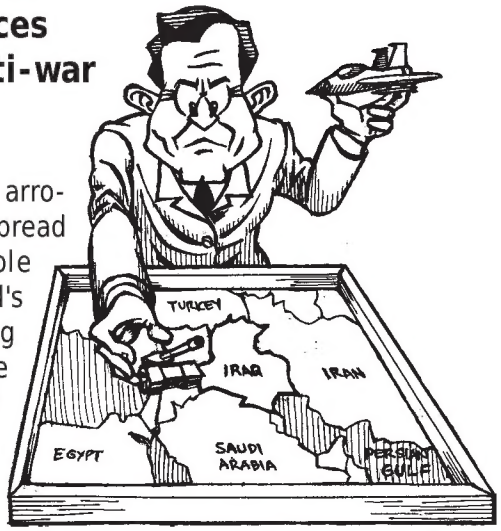
Successes in publishing *AB*

Aside from special issues, AB's monthly issues have been coming out continuously for 30 months since September 2000.

- AB is one of the few publications in the Philippines published in the country's six major languages (the original Pilipino as well as English, Bisaya, Iloko, Hiligaynon, and— since May 2002— Waray). This signifies the Party's decisiveness to make AB accessible to the most number of readers in the language they best understand.
- AB is now more rapidly distributed via the internet. Its website was revived in 2002 after being sabotaged in December 2001 due to restrictions imposed by the US.
- It is reproduced through various means. In some regions, copies of AB are mass produced through the widespread collective efforts of the entire mass movement, as well as with the assistance of allies, through electric mimeographing machines or v-type mimeographing devices. Supplies of paper, ink and other needs are often raised through the help of the masses and allies. Aside from soliciting donations in kind, in many localities, there is a fine practice where readers pay for their copies of AB to sustain its production and expand the newspaper's circulation. Modern means of reproduction are likewise used in various regions: offset printing presses, digital duplicators, photocopiers and computer printers, among others.
- AB is distributed at a national average of more than one copy for every Party member. In some regions, the ratio goes up to more than 10 per member. There is a relatively widespread distribution system where copies are coursed through and penetrate even remote sitios in the countryside. AB

Mounting obstacles

US plan to attack Iraq faces growing international anti-war movement



US imperialism persists in its arrogant disregard for widespread resistance from the people and the majority of the world's countries to its plans of attacking and occupying Iraq. It has become even more desperate in the face of growing opposition and its further isolation along with its few cohorts.

More than 310,000 US troops have been surrounding Iraq since February. The United Kingdom has deployed up to 40,000 troops to assist the American soldiers. Most of these forces are now along the Kuwaiti border training their guns at the Iraqi city of Basra. The 10,000 US forces stationed in Afghanistan are also poised to join the impending strike. Aside from a number of key military units, the US has now completed its arsenal in the Middle East.

The US nonetheless faces new obstacles. On March 1, the US failed in its bid to have the Turkish parliament approve basing rights for US forces in the southern part of the country due to widespread protests by the Turkish people. The US had planned to deploy 62,000 American troops, 255 warplanes and 65 helicopters in Turkey for its anti-Iraq offensive.

The use of Turkey would have posed a big advantage as this would have divided the Iraqi forces by forcing them to defend both the north and south, with Turkey serving as a launching pad from the north and Kuwait (and Qatar) serving as launching pads from the south. But with Turkey's refusal to allow attacks from its territory, the US will now be obliged to shift plans by launching an attack from the Black Sea (north of Turkey) or use still other means.

Prior to this, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) had refused to give military support to Turkey. Germany, Belgium and France led in denying a US request to send additional military equipment and aid to Turkey in preparation for any counter-strike from Iraq.

Along with the US' failure in Turkey, even the League of Arab States (Arab League) has been forced to declare a complete repudiation of any act of aggression against Iraq. The Arab League is composed of 22 countries surrounding Iraq.

In spite of this, US military planes continue to bomb important facilities in southern Iraq. The US continues to brag that it will push through with its war of aggression against Iraq with our without UN support.

Rifts among imperialist countries

US imperialism's arrogance and unilateralism have deepened rifts

among imperialist countries and the isolation of the most rabid warmongers and war supporters. The world's countries are now divided between the few who compose the tenuous pro-US alliance— the United Kingdom, Australia and Spain and some puppet states they control— and the overwhelming majority of countries opposed to the war.

The US' obstinacy in attacking Iraq has thoroughly exposed the grave contradictions and the US' extreme isolation even within international institutions set up to serve as mere conduits of imperialist policies.

On March 7, the US is set to file a resolution that judges Iraq to have violated UN regulations regarding the manufacture and maintenance of weapons of mass destruction, a condition it wishes to use to legalize the attack on Iraq. The majority of countries have expressed their opposition to the resolution even before its formal filing, especially as the weapons inspection team does not support the US' assessment.

The majority of small and underdeveloped countries have also been crying out their opposition to the way US imperialism has been arrogantly throwing its weight around and fomenting war. During the 13th conference of the Non-aligned Movement (NAM) on February 24-25, NAM's 116 member countries united and signed a resolution against the US war on Iraq. In NAM's view, the US' objective in waging war on Iraq is to further its domination of the world. They now consider the US as the biggest threat to the majority underdeveloped countries. AB

Worldwide opposition to anti-Iraq war

United stand demonstrated in unprecedented protest actions

On February 14-16, the whole world reverberated with the condemnation and opposition of millions of people to US imperialism's belligerent and oppressive policies. It was a demonstration of renewed vigor and manifested a new peak in the international anti-imperialist movement.

The extent of unity reached by the international mass movement against US wars of aggression in general and the impending attack on Iraq in particular, has been exceptional. The movement likewise opposes other US wars of aggression: its aggression in Afghanistan, the start of aggression in the Philippines and the US' continued blessings and support for Israeli aggression against Palestine.

In the key cities of Europe and North America (Canada and the US), the demonstrations on February 14-16 were the biggest and broadest in their history. They have surpassed the biggest rallies during the time of the Vietnam war.

IN OTHER PARTS OF THE GLOBE, PROTEST MOVEMENTS ARE GAINING MOMENTUM and strength, especially against puppet states that rabidly support the US policy of aggression.

Thus, the majority puppet states have been inhibited from directly supporting aggression. In countries where protests have been most vigorous, the most rabid supporters of the war are rapidly becoming isolated from the people.

There is growing opposition even among reactionaries. The reactionary class in Turkey was split when 251 members of the country's parliament voted against a US plan to use Turkey as a base for war. In the United Kingdom, Prime Minister Tony Blair's partymates voted massively against his proposal to blindly support US belligerency.

Within the US, more than 80 local councils, including the council of the city of Los Angeles, filed a resolution against the Bush government's war plans.

The people have been tirelessly campaigning and launching various forms of mass actions. More than 5,000 poets wrote anti-war poems as their contribution to the burgeoning mass movement. Actors, athletes and other famous personalities came out with advertisements on radio and television. Plays in the UK ridiculed the US president's arrogant stance. More than 400,000 activists organized people's phone, FAX and internet brigades to flood the White House and other US government offices with millions of protest messages. In Malaysia, almost a million people signed an anti-war petition.

There have also been other creative and extraordinary forms of protest. Several groups have trooped to Iraq to serve as human shields, positioning themselves in front of US bombing targets. Hundreds of

women and men protested nude on separate occasions in Australia, the US and Chile.

Some groups have launched citizen's weapons inspections in the US and its allied countries in Europe. They aim to prove that it is the US instead of Iraq that poses a big threat to world security, because it has the largest arsenal of nuclear, biological and chemical arms—the so-called weapons of mass destruction. Others have also protested by blocking trains carrying US war matériel to the Middle East.

THE PROTESTS CONTINUE. Thousands of American students trooped out of their classrooms on March 5. Under the program "Books not War," they expressed their solidarity with Iraqi students who would be most affected by a war of aggression.

In Turkey, 100,000 persons poured out into the streets to broadcast their opposition to members of their parliament as the latter voted on a resolution regarding the entry of additional American troops into Turkey. When the resolution failed to pass, the demonstration swelled in celebration of their victory.

In Malaysia on February 24, up to 200,000 rallied in the city center. Up to 100,000 protested in Pakistan on March 4. AB

Significant protest actions on February 14-16

Italy: Rome, Monza, Turin: 2.5 million **Spain**: Madrid; Barcelona, Seville, Oviedo, Las Palmas, Cadiz, Gerona: 3.68 million **Britain:** London: 1.5-2 million **France:** Paris, Montpellier, Lyon: 840,000 **US:** New York City, Los Angeles, Seattle, Minneapolis, San Diego, Philadelphia: 910,000 **Germany:** Berlin, Stuttgart: 55,000 **Australia:** Melbourne, Newcastle, Perth, Canberra: 255,000 **Greece:** Athens, Thessalonika: 240,000 **Canada:** Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver, Edmonton: 270,000 **Ireland:** Dublin, Belfast: 170,000 **Belgium:** Brussels: 100,000 **Portugal:** Lisbon: 100,000 **The Netherlands:** Amsterdam, 80,000 **Sweden:** Stockholm, Gotenborg, Malmo: 80,000 **Scotland:** Glasgow: 100,000 **Norway:** Oslo, Trondheim, Stavenger, Bergen: 84,000 **Mexico:** Mexico City: 50,000 **Uruguay:** Montevideo: 50,000 **Denmark:** Copenhagen: 35-40,000 **Austria:** Vienna: 30,000 **Japan:** Tokyo: 25,000 **Hungary:** Budapest: 20,000 **Basque Country** (Spain): Irunea: 20,000 **Luxembourg:** 15-20,000 **Brazil:** Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, Sao Paolo: 60,000 **Finland:** Helsinki, Turku: 20,000 **India:** Calcutta: 10,000 **South Africa:** Johannesburg, Capetown: 15,000 **Croatia:** Zagreb: 10,000 **New Zealand:** Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and others: 21,500 **Iraq:** Baghdad: 100,000 **Egypt:** Cairo: 2,000 **Korea:** Seoul: 10,000 **Philippines:** Manila: 6,000 **Palestine:** Gaza: 15,000 **Switzerland:** Bern: 40,000 **Syria:** Damascus: 200,000 **Thailand:** Bangkok, Pattani: 13,000 **Turkey:** Istanbul: 5,000 **Peru:** Lima: 5,000

100,000 rally at the Luneta

Up to 100,000 people attended the Prayer Assembly for Peace at the Quirino Grandstand, Luneta (Rizal Park) on February 28 to express their vigorous opposition to the war in Iraq and in Mindanao. They came from the ranks of the poor, the petty bourgeoisie, national minorities and various religions and sects. The rally was the biggest among the successive mass actions held in the Philippines since January against the US war of aggression in Iraq.

Aside from members of militant organizations like BAYAN and Bayan Muna, Vice President Teofisto Guingona and leaders and representatives of other institutions like the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines likewise attended the rally,

Rafael Mariano of BAYAN said that Macapagal-Arroyo was very much alone in the arms of Bush and other war hawks. He demanded that Macapagal-Arroyo immediately withdraw all US troops from Mindanao to prevent a repetition in the country of a tragedy like the Vietnam war. Also read at the rally was a message from Jaime Cardinal Sin, warning against "enemies of peace." Guingona criticized growing US intervention in the country.

Various forms and methods of protest were also held in different parts of the country. A Peace Concert was held at UP Diliman, Quezon City. More than 500 students staged a vigil at UP Los Baños on February 27. People lit cadles in Pangil, Laguna. The following day, 4,000 members of the Justice not War Coalition-ST held a prayer rally before proceeding to Manila. Some 1,000 persons from seven provinces in Central Luzon led by BAYAN rallied in Angeles City. Students and teachers from eight schools in Legazpi City, Albay led by the Promotion of Church People's Response (Bicol) lit candles in Peñaranda Park. More than 1,000 prayed on the evening of February 28 at St. Ferdinand Cathedral in Lucena City. Mass actions were also launched by Innabuyog-Gabriela in Baguio City. Protesters likewise massed up at the Immaculate Conception Cathedral in Puerto Princesa City, Palawan.

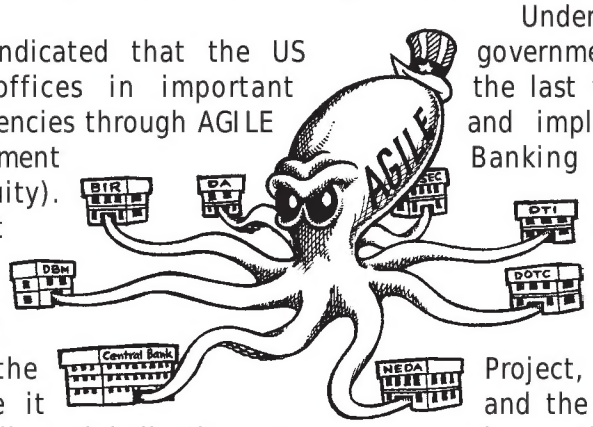
The rally organizers declared that the activity would be followed up with many more forums and marches for peace in various areas nationwide. AB

A tentacle of the US

US directly meddles in the Philippine economy through AGILE

Concrete evidence recently exposed to the public shows the depth and breadth of US government intervention in the Philippines' internal economic affairs.

This February, exposés indicated that the US maintains personnel and offices in important economic departments and agencies through AGILE (Accelerating Growth, Investment and Liberalization with Equity). Attending even to the finest details, it is AGILE that ensures in behalf of the US, that the needed laws and economic programs in the Philippines that would make it hew to the policy of imperialist "globalization" are enacted.



AGILE is a program formally begun in 1998 with the goal of implementing laws and policies pushed by the US for the all-out liberalization of the Philippine economy. It was set up by Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI), an American company that has long been closely associated with the US government and whose specialty is pushing pro-US "government reforms" in various countries. To implement the AGILE project in the Philippines, DAI received $41.2 million from the US Agency for International Development. US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone serves as the local coordinator for DAI projects in the Philippines. AGILE likewise connives with other agencies that are also tentacles of US imperialism, such as the Asia Foundation, Center for Research and Communications and Foundation for Economic Freedom. All US-funded, these entities are likewise known fronts and lairs of the US Central Intelligence Agency's agents in the Philippines.

AGILE has offices inside important government executive departments and agencies, including the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

Its 99-strong personnel planted in these offices serve as the brains behind bills, laws and policies pushed by these departments and agencies that have significant bearing on the course of the country's economy, especially with respect to the liberalization of trade and investments. AGILE also has people who focus on Congress and the Senate to ensure that bills in the Philippines pushed by the US are passed into law. AGILE grants and arranges large "financial assistance packages" for the programs and projects of government officials it wishes to "win over."

Under AGILE's guidance, the reactionary government's most important measures in the last two to three years were enacted and implemented, including the General Banking Act of 2000, Electric Power Industry Reform Act, Retail Trade Liberalization Act, Securities Regulations Code, Electronic Commerce Law, Customs Valuation Law, Judicial Reform Project, Special Purpose Assets Vehicle and the Air Transport Agreement, among others. All of these laws furthered the liberalization of the economy.

AGILE has also gone all-out in pushing the privatization of government agencies. It is behind the abolition of the National Food Authority and the elimination of tariffs on agricultural products in accordance with GATT and WTO provisions. It is also the main proponent of the abolition of the Bureau of Internal Revenue and replacing it with the National Authority for Revenue Administration.

AGILE was also involved in drafting and pushing the Anti-Money Laundering Act (AMLA). The US has been demanding AMLA's implementation ostensibly to freeze terrorist funds. It aims to grant the government sweeping authority to look into any bank account it considers suspicious, in violation of existing policies on the privacy of bank transactions.

That US imperialism directly intervenes through AGILE comes as no surprise. It likewise comes as no surprise to see the puppet government's mindless defense of AGILE. To save itself and avoid the people's greater loathing, Malacañang strains to make it appear that AGILE merely dishes out "advice" and conducts studies.

In the face of disclosures regarding the US' direct dictation of, and intervention in, Philippine laws and policies, Malacañang and Congress still insist that it is the government and not AGILE, that decides on legislation. This starkly illustrates even further the puppetry of the reactionary state.

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Series of offensives launched in February

The reactionary and puppet military troops reeled from successive blows inflicted by the New People's Army (NPA) this February.

Philippine Army troops, CAFGU forces ambushed in Capiz. Six soldiers belonging to the Special Operations Team under Task Force Panay and a CAFGU element were killed in an ambush on February 24 staged by Red fighters of the Jose Percival Estocada Command-Central Front in Barangay Daan Sur, Tapaz. One other soldier was wounded. The team had broken away from an 18-man platoon of the 12th IB when it was ambushed while crossing Sibaguan creek.

The enemy force was almost wiped out. Seized from the soldiers were four M16s, an M203, an M14 and a UHF radio. On the other hand, the Coronacion "Waling-Waling" Chiva Command-Panay announced that the ambuscade's leader, Ismael "Ka Bob" Geganto, was martyred in this firefight.

10 high-powered firearms seized in Agusan del Sur. Red fighters conducted a raid without firing a single shot on the detachment of the 36th IB in Barangay Zamora, Talacogon on February 16. They seized seven M14s, two M16s, a Garand, ammunition of various caliber and fatigue uniforms.

Police detachment raided in Sorsogon. Three policemen were killed and an M16 was confiscated in an NPA raid in Gubat on the night of February 14. The NPA was able to conduct the daring raid on the Kababayan Police Assistance Center, which is merely 300 meters away from the Gubat Municipal Police Station and the headquarters of the 508th Mobile Police Group and the 21st IB. Prior to this, the NPA conducted simultaneous harassment operations on the night of February 13 against PNP detachments in Barangay Tandaay, Nabua and Barangay Parubcan, Presentacion, both in Camarines Sur.

10 soldiers killed in Zambales. Contrary to reports from the Northern Luzon Command (Nolcom), not two but 10 soldiers from the 24th IB were killed in a clash in Barangay Cabauatan, Botolan on February 1 (not February 7, as previously reported). Many other soldiers were wounded, according to a clarificatory statement from Jose Agtalon, spokesperson of the Josepino Corpuz Command (NPA-Central). Agtalon likewise belied military reports that 18 NPA fighters were killed in the fighting. Agtalon said that one Red fighter was martyred.

As a result of their defeat, the fascist military vent its ire on suspected sympathizers of the revolutionary movement. Agtalon said soldiers of the 24th IB massacred six members of an Aeta family in Sitio Palis, Barangay Magisgis, Botolan. They also sowed violence in the neighboring sitio of Nakolkol.

Notorious police chief punished in Cavite

A special team of operatives from the Melito Glor Command (NPA-Southern Tagalog) successfully meted punishment on Sr. Supt. Eriberto Paglinawan on the morning of February 14. Paglinawan, the police chief of Cabuyao, Laguna, was punished in Barangay Lumil, Silang, Cavite on the morning of February 14. The NPA seized his M14 and .45 pistol.

In a statement, Melito Glor Command spokesperson Tirso "Ka Bart" Alcantara said Paglinawan's latest cases involved his having directly led brutal dispersal operations against barricades and picket lines set up by striking workers of Nestlé-Philippines in Sala, Cabuyao, Laguna. In an incident that occurred on June 3, up to 17 workers were wounded, including some who sustained arm and shoulder fractures and severe head injuries. Many others were mercilessly truncheoned, beaten up, stoned, hosed with a water-chemical mixture and teargassed. He also conducted zoning, harassment and intelligence operations in communities that were strongly supportive of the strike.

Paglinawan has long been active in intelligence and "anti-insurgency" campaigns. Before his assignment as chief of the Cabuyao PNP in 1988, Paglinawan was assigned at the Regional Intelligence and Investigation Division at Camp Vicente Lim in Laguna.

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All of this confirms what the Party and the revolutionary movement have been saying all along about the US' absolute neocolonial rule over the Philippines and about its government's being a mere puppet controlled by US imperialism. With current US intervention in the country's internal military and political affairs also brought to light, timely disclosures on AGILE's activities demonstrate how the US has been all-encompassing and unsparing in its intervention in all aspects of social life in the Philippines.

This all proves the correctness of, and the urgent need to, advance the revolutionary struggle to liberate ourselves from the clutches of US imperialism. AB

Partial list of agencies run by AGILE

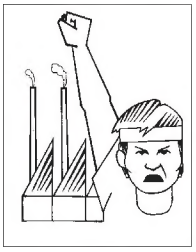
Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas; Department of Finance; Department of Budget and Management; Department of Trade and Industry; Securities and Exchange Commission; Bureau of Internal Revenue; Bureau of Customs; Philippine Stock Exchange; National Telecommunications Commission; National Economic Development Authority; Department of Transportation and Communications; Department of Agriculture

American official spotted in Bicol

US Army Maj. Jeffrey D. Antonio was spotted making the rounds of guerrilla zones in Bicol as part of preparations to turn the region into an experimental area for counter-guerrilla concepts and tactics that the US wants to try out in the Philippines.

Forces from the 203rd, 901st and 902nd Brigades provided security for Major Antonio as he went around areas in the region where he plans to implement a "US-RP humanitarian assistance" program. In this regard, massive clearing operations were launched by the concerned AFP troops.

Two days after Antonio's "visit" came the launching of the first Regional Area Coordinating Center of KALAHI (Kapit Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan or "Linking Arms Against Poverty"). Contrary to its name, the program's main objective and overall content involves coordinating the military, police and bureaucratic machinery as well as propaganda and diplomatic initiatives for a comprehensuve "counter-insurgency" program. It forms part of the National Internal Security Plan forged by Malacañang's Cabinet Oversight Committee on Internal Security. The "diplomatic" initiatives include the "US-RP humanitarian assistance" project being set up in Bicol.



Central Azucarera de Tarlac strikers win

Six-hundred sixty-one (661) workers won most of their demands presented to the owners of Hacienda Luisita and the Central Azucarera de Tarlac (CAT) on February 27, after staging a six-day strike.

Foremost among the demands won by the workers were the restoration of medical benefits for members of the Central Azucarera de Tarlac Labor Union (CATLU); the immediate assignment of regular workers to vacant positions; and the regularization of seasonal workers who had already worked for six months.

CATLU was supported by members of Kilusang Mayo Uno-Nagkakaisang Manggagawa ng Tarlac.

Hacienda Luisita and CAT are owned by the Cojuangco siblings, including former President Corazon Aquino and former Cong. Jose Cojuangco Jr., who is now one of Macapagal-Arroyo's advisers.

Struggle at Lepanto mines victorious

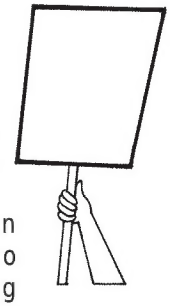
Striking workers of the Lepanto Consolidated Mining Company (LCMC) won their struggle on March 2 when management agreed to reinstate 24 out of 42 union leaders laid off by the LCMC (the 18 others opted to leave the LCMC after receiving their separation pay and other benefits).

Policemen previously attacked their picket lines several times in an attempt to break the strike. Twenty-six strikers were arrested. A worker died from a heart attack because of clashes at the picket line, while many others were beaten up when policemen attacked the strikers' ranks on February 8, 18 and 19.

The workers struck on February 1 to demand a stop to forced work even during Christmas, longer working days and the hiring of more contractual workers. The strike was supported by the Cordillera Peoples' Alliance, Kilusang Mayo Uno and Dinteg-Cordillera Human Rights Organization.

The LCMC is one of the country's biggest producers of gold and copper, and has a 2,586-strong workforce. It earns $47 million (more than P2.54 billion) annually from its mineral exports.

Strikes paralyze transportation in Pampanga, Bulacan, Negros



Massive strikes launched by thousands of jeepney and tricycle drivers paralyzed public transportation in Pampanga on March 4 and in Bulacan on February 24. The drivers struck to oppose excessive fees charged for testing their vehicles under the Clean Air Act as well as continued oil price hikes.

In Pampanga, the strikes paralyzed 90% of transportation within Angeles City as well as routes going to Mabalacat and Tarlac. Seventy percent (70%) of transportation was also paralyzed in San Fernando.

In Bulacan, drivers set up barricades in Malolos City, Meycauayan, Baliuag, Plaridel, Pulilan and Sta. Maria.

Almost 95% of transportation in Negros Occidental and parts of Negros Oriental was also paralyzed on February 20-21 when members of the United Drivers-Operators Center (UNDOC) struck in Bacolod City to oppose the Clean Air Act.